18. The method of claim 14, wherein the RNAi agent is prepared by incubating a double-stranded RNA in the presence of an RDE-4 polypeptide.

19. The method of claim 14 wherein the RNAi agent is prepared by incubating a double-stranded RNA in the presence of an RDE-1 polypeptide and RDE-4 polypeptide.

20. The method of claim 14, wherein the RNAi agent is introduced into the cell in a liposome.

21. The method of claim 14, wherein the RNAi agent is introduced into the cell by injection.

22. The method of claim 14, wherein the cell is in an animal.

23. A method of inhibiting the activity of a gene in a cell, the method comprising
(a) introducing an RNAi pathway component into the cell, and
(b) introducing a double-stranded RNA (dsRNA) into the cell, wherein the dsRNA is targeted to the gene.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the RNAi pathway component is introduced into the cell by introducing into the cell a nucleic acid sequence that encodes an RNAi pathway component.

25. The method of claim 23, wherein the dsRNA is introduced into the cell by introducing into the cell a nucleic acid sequence that encodes the dsRNA.

26. The method of claim 23, wherein the RNAi pathway component is an RDE-1 polypeptide.

27.   The method of claim 23, wherein the RNAi pathway component is an RDE-4 polypeptide.

28.   The method of claim 23, wherein a second RNAi pathway component is introduced into the cell.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the RNAi pathway components are an RDE-1 polypeptide and an RDE-4 polypeptide.

30.   The method of claim 23, wherein the RNAi pathway component is introduced into the cell in a liposome.

31.   The method of claim 23, wherein the dsRNA is introduced into the cell in a liposome.

32.   The method of claim 23, wherein the RNAi component is introduced into the cell by injection.

33.   The method of claim 23, wherein the dsRNA is introduced into the cell by injection.

34.   The method of claim 23, wherein the cell is in an animal.--

In the drawings:

Please substitute the enclosed drawings (21 pages) for the drawings filed with the present application.